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**Zora Neale Hurston Celebration Encourages Community
to Read Novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God***

Author Zora Neale Hurston was largely forgotten until a number of black authors rediscovered her work in the late 1960s. In 1972, Hurston gained recognition when Alice Walker published the essay "In Search of Zora Neale Hurston," in Ms. Magazine. Long out of print, Hurston's book *Their Eyes Were Watching God* was reissued in 1975. Nearly three decades later, the book is considered a seminal novel of American Fiction.

Today, the EMRYS Foundation is encouraging the community to read this great work of American fiction and join in a three-day celebration of Hurston's life. The event, sponsored by EMRYS, the Greenville Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and Greenville Parks and Recreation, will include:

- **Thursday, October 16: A One-Woman Show of Hurston by Phyllis McEwen**

7:30-8:30 pm, at J. Verne Smith Auditorium, Greenville Technical College

Spend an hour with Zora Neale Hurston, as recreated by poet Phyllis McEwen in the style of Chautauqua performances. McEwen will read from Hurston's work as well as take questions from the audience.

- **Friday, October 17: Panel Discussion on community book reading of *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.**

7:00-8:30 pm, Meeting Rooms A&B at Greenville County Library, 25 Heritage Green Place.

Participate in a panel discussion on Hurston's book, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. The community is invited to read the book prior to the discussion.

The discussion panel will include:

- Moderator Nancy Taylor, Ph.D., English teacher in North and South Carolina public schools, at the University of Puerto Rico, University of

South Carolina and Lander University, before working for the Greenville Hospital System as a medical editor and teacher of medical humanities to residents and faculty.

- Jo Ann Long, professor of English at Greenville Technical College, who has taught the works of Hurston many times, as well as presented papers on Hurston at national conferences.
- Margaret Marks, Ph.D., professor of English, Emerita, of Lander University, with a specialty in Southern Literature.
- Glenis Redmond, performance poet and teacher. Her poetry collection, *Backbone*, was published by Underground Epics in 2000. In 2004, she will become of the educators-in-residence at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, D.C.
- Jo Ann Walker, founder and former president of the Emrys Foundation. She has written and presented papers on Hurston.

- **Saturday, October 18: Writer's Workshop with poet Phyllis McEwen**

10 am-2 pm, City Training Center, Cleveland Park

\$85 per person by Oct. 6; \$95 late registration. Includes lunch.

Take your writing to the next level at this informal writing and poetry workshop, open to both beginning and experienced writers, aged from high school to adult.

Phyllis McEwen, who will lead the Hurston Celebration, has been a Literature and Black Studies Specialist at the University of South Florida and the Resource Center Director at Florida Humanities Council. She wrote for "Jump at the Sun" traveling exhibits connected with the *Zora Neale Hurston Festival of the Arts*. Later she became a part of the Humanities Council's Florida Chautauqua as Hurston. McEwen also is a poet and performance artist, and was the poetry editor of the *Tampa Bay Review* from 1989 to 1992.

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